pointed out the correspondence in outline of each division with the form of the two-celled anther. The inner line of stamens were alternate with these divisions, and the whole study led to the conclusion that this little crown was composed of the immature anthers of abortive stamens. He referred to *Acer rubrum*, and other plants, where, in the abortion of stamens the anthers were generally almost fully formed before the development of the filament, and remarked that in truly female flowers of this maple there was a course of sterile anthers as in this *Spiræa*.

MARCH 16.

Mr. THOMAS MEEHAN, Vice-President, in the chair.

Sixteen persons present.

MARCH 23.

The President, Dr. LEIDY, in the chair.

Twenty-eight persons present.

Fermentation in Perenji's Fluid.—Dr. BENJAMIN SHARP remarked that in a bottle of Perenji's fluid (nitric acid 10 per cent. sol. 4 pts., Chromic acid ½ per cent. sol. 3 pts., 95 per cent. Alcohol 3 pts.) effervescence was noticed. On shaking the bottle and removing the cork the fluid frothed violently, resembling very active beer; when the frothing had to a certain extent subsided, another shaking produced another violent frothing. The fluid had been used for hardening chick embryoes, and the portion used had been turned back so that a slight sediment was in the bottom of the bottle, and from this sediment the frothing seemed to originate. The sediment was examined with a high power lens, and Bacteria were found in great numbers. They were probably introduced with the sediment caused by the hardening of the organic tissues upon which they lived.

On the Eye of Pecten.—Prof. SHARP further called the attention of the members to the eye of *Pecten*. In one of his articles (On the Visual Organs of the Lamellebranchiata, Mitth. Zool. Stat. Neapel, 1884, p. 457), he makes the following assertion: "The question as to the function of this organ (the so-called eye of *Pecten*) is one of considerable interest. Hickson states that a few experiments have been made on this subject, concerning the visual power of this animal; he says 'It is very doubtful whether they (the so-called eyes) are of much value to the animal in avoiding its enemies. The most reasonable theory of their function seems to be that when in the ebbing tide, a

probability arises that they will be left high and dry on the shore, they can appreciate the fact by the growing intensity of the light, and by that peculiar flapping motion of the valves the Pectens are so remarkable for, move away into deeper water.' This theory may at once be set aside when we consider that the Pectens of the Mediterranean, where we have practically no tide at all, a state of affairs that has existed for an exceedingly long period of time, have as well developed eyes as those found on shores where tides do exist; and further, it seems hardly probable that such a complicated organ would have developed to determine for the animal whether it be out of water or not. . . . As regards the complicated organ known as the eye, I might suggest that, if this be an eye, it is one where we have no true pigmented layer in any direct relation to either the nerve or the retina. The mass of red pigment and the metallic-like tapetum would hardly answer the place of the black choroid coat so essential to the eye."

Dr. Sharp stated that at the time the above was written, he was under the impression that the organ was probably a phosphorescent organ, but he had no proof of it. At Nantucket he obtained many specimens of the animal and found that the edge of the mantle was phosphorent, and on questioning Dr. Kite, formerly of the "Fish-Hawk," who had often seen *Pecten* dredged at night, he was informed that the phosphorent condition of Pectens had often been observed. He thought it was not unreasonable to suppose that organs for the emission of light should be formed upon the same general principles as organs for the admission of light, hence the similarity of these organs to eyes. He further stated that this function (phosphorescence) would be of great use to the animal in obtaining its food.

On Amia and its probable Tænia.—Prof. LEIDY stated that in our market on Saturday last, three Mud-fishes, *Amia calva*, had been given to him. They came in a barrel of shad from North Carolina. One was a female about two feet long, the others male, of which the smallest was eight inches. Protruding from the vent of the latter was a little tape-worm, which, on disturbance, retreated into the rectum. Three other worms of the same kind were found in the mouth, but none were in the intestine of this or the other fishes. The worms accord with the description of the *Tænia filicolis*, infesting Sticklebacks, *Gasterosteus*, and is probably the same species. They range from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 inches long, gradually widening from the delicate thread-like neck to the posterior rounded extremity where they measure from 1· to 1·5 mm. wide. The head is spheroidal, variably broader or longer, and about 0·625 mm.; with the summit slightly prominent and unarmed, and with four hemispherical, lateral bothria 0·25 mm. in diameter. Neck variable; when extended, long and narrow and usually about half the width of the head. Anterior segments,